

flow in next three years and provision of debt relief to the farmers affected by natural calamities. Following are the highlights of this announcement:

- (i) Credit flow to agriculture sector to increase @ 30% per year.
- (ii) Debt restructuring in respect of farmers in distress and farmers in arrears providing for rescheduling of outstanding loans over a period of five years including moratorium of two years, thereby making all farmers eligible for fresh credit.
- (iii) Special One time Settlement scheme for settling the old and chronic loan accounts of small and marginal farmers.
- (iv) Banks allowed to finance for redeeming the loans taken by farmers from private moneylenders.
- (v) Commercial Banks to finance @ 100 farmers per branch; 50 lakh new farmers to be financed by the banks in a year.
- (vi) Refinements in Kisan Credit Cards (KCCs) and fixation of scale of finance.

Relief to farmers of Uttar Pradesh

258. DR. PRABHA THAKUR:

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have ascertained the facts on the recent media reports on the meager amounts being distributed as relief to farmers in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) whether Government have also taken cognizance of reported corruption by the local administrative functionary in distributing the relief;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to ensure effective and efficient delivery of the relief aid to the farmers in affected areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA) (a) to (d) There are laid down items and norms of expenditure for assistance from relief funds in the wake of natural calamities viz. Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and National Calamity

Contingency Fund (NCCF). Distribution of relief at the ground level is the responsibility of State Governments concerned.

The Government of Uttar Pradesh have informed that relief aids to the farmers in the affected areas are distributed in accordance with items and norms as formulated by the Government of India. They have further informed that it has been ensured that the relief amount less than Rs. 1,000/- is distributed through the bearer cheques and the relief amount of Rs. 1,000/- or above is distributed through the account payee cheques to the affected persons. According to them, it had also been ensured that the relief amount is distributed to the affected persons in the presence of supervisory officers and local public representatives after due publicity in the villages. The receipt of the amount received by the affected person is signed and verified by the local Lekhpal and Gram-Pradhan as identification and kept in Government record. The list of relief amount distributed is displayed on the notice board and is read out in the open meeting of Gram-Sabha.

MSP of wheat and other Grains

259. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

SHRIMATI SYED ANWARA TAIMUR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have raised the Minimum Support Price of wheat and other grains, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether this MSP restores parity between domestic and international foodgrain prices, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government would consider to have different procurement prices to ensure sufficient stocks of foodgrains if intended amount of foodgrains are not purchased on the MSP, if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) The Government has recently fixed the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) of rabi crops, including wheat, of 2006-07 season. The MSPs are as follows.